

ROBERT INDIANA: *TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE*
at the State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg



Robert Indiana – Terra Nova, Acrylic on Canvas (1981)

Opening: April 7, 2016, 4pm at The Marble Palace

Exhibition dates: April 7, 2016 – June 7, 2016

Galerie Gmurzynska is thrilled to announce Robert Indiana's major retrospective *TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE* at the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. This is the artist's first exhibition in Russia and spans his entire career of the past six decades.

Robert Indiana rose to prominence in the early 1960s as a key protagonist of the emerging Pop Art movement. Renowned for his use of audacious colors in his own striking interpretation of hard-edge painting, Indiana's work draws on a multitude of visual vernaculars encompassing the high and the low. Merging literary sources with the signage system unique to the American commercial landscape, Indiana's work represents a simultaneously broad yet also autobiographically coded pictorial language derived from these signifiers.

Indiana's doubtlessly most widely known work is his word-image LOVE, first conceived for The Museum of Modern Art's (New York) Christmas card in 1965. A stamp released that same year bearing the motif became a nationwide bestseller, while LOVE would soon adorn myriad objects and media of various scales and shapes across the globe, spreading Indiana's universal message in the most democratic and powerful ways modern art is capable of.

This universal status of LOVE is further emphasized not only by way of the motif's varying manifestation as a metal sculpture, a painting or a screen print but furthermore through its translation into the respective language of the locale LOVE inhabits. In doing so the concept of LOVE as a unifying force regardless of nationality and ethnicity is given timeless formal shape.

Evgenia Petrova
Deputy Director for Academic Research
The State Russian Museum

This exhibition at the Russian Museum is organized with the participation and support of Zurich-based Galerie Gmurzynska and includes sculptures such as *LOVE* alongside paintings and graphic works. Together the selection of works provides a representative survey over Indiana's at times ironic oeuvre, rich in associative and metaphorical imagery that speaks to the artist's biography as much as to the contemporary world around him.

Indiana's multi-faceted work continues to be exhibited widely, most recently in the critically acclaimed Pop art exhibits *Ludwig Goes Pop* touring the Ludwig Museum Cologne, the MUMOK Vienna and the Ludwig Múzeum Budapest as well as in the showcase *International Pop* at The Dallas Museum of Art.

On the occasion of Pope Francis's visit to the City of Philadelphia in the fall of 2015, Robert Indiana's *AMOR* sculpture was exhibited until January 2016 atop the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Galerie Gmurzynska has mounted several expansive exhibitions of Indiana's work and published extensive catalogues, notably "Robert Indiana: Rare Works from 1959 on Coenties Slip" (2011) and "Robert Indiana: The Monumental Woods" (2013).

The exhibition in Saint Petersburg will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue in Russian and English, featuring rare archival images alongside essays by noted scholars Evgenia Petrova (State Russian Museum), Susan Elizabeth Ryan, Professor Joachim Pissarro (City University New York – CUNY) and Anthony Haden-Guest.

Robert Indiana TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE
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